

DYNAMITE #4

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THE Shadow[®]



THE

Shadow®

WHO KNOWS WHAT EVIL LURKS
IN THE HEARTS OF MEN?

THE SHADOW KNOWS!

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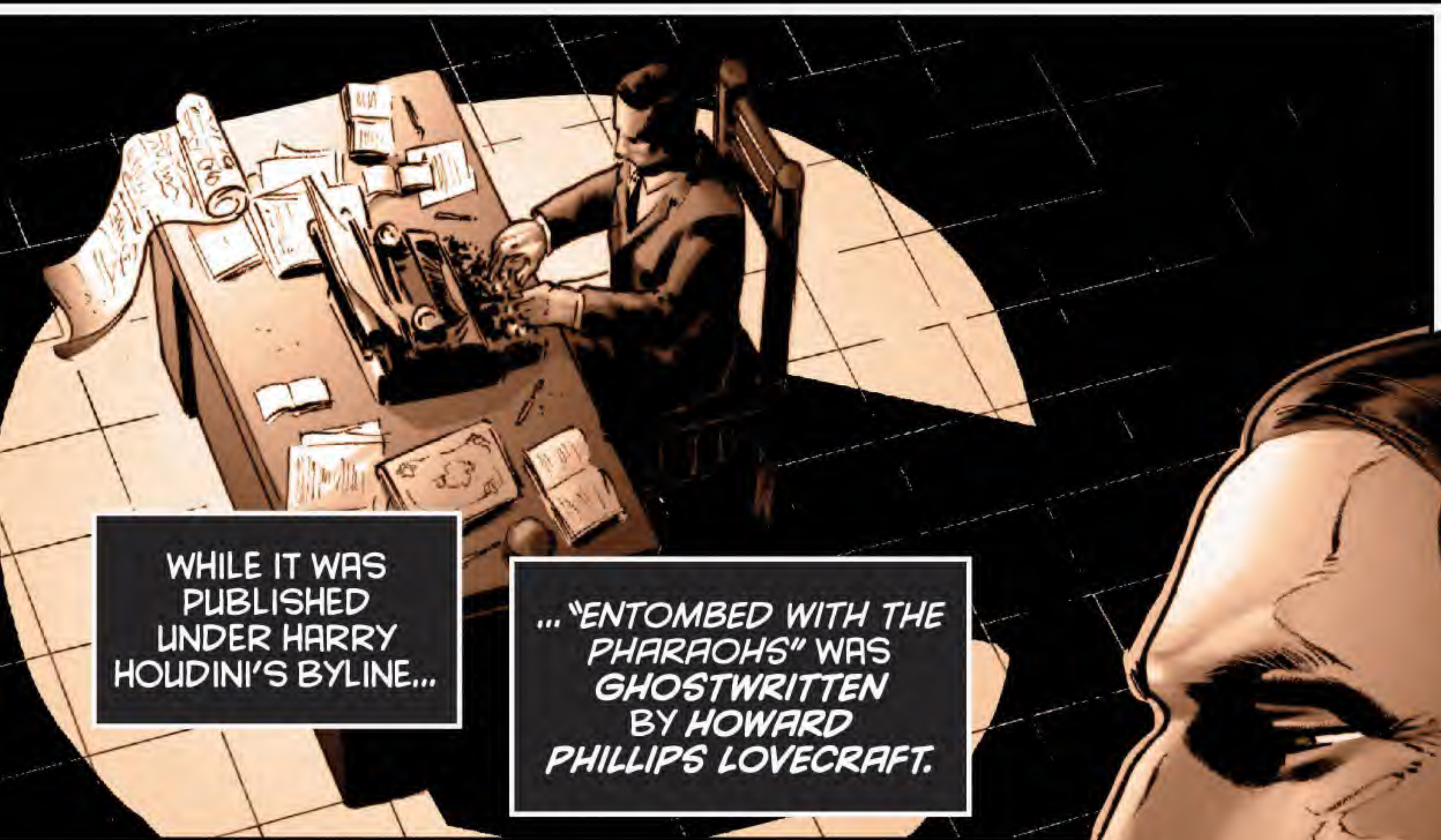


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WHILE IT WAS
PUBLISHED
UNDER HARRY
HOUDINI'S BYLINE...

... "ENTOMBED WITH THE
PHARAOHS" WAS
GHOSTWRITTEN
BY HOWARD
PHILLIPS LOVECRAFT.



LOVECRAFT WAS
AN AUTHOR OF
GHASTLY FICTION...

...MOST FREQUENTLY
PUBLISHED IN THE
PAGES OF *WEIRD
TALES* MAGAZINE.

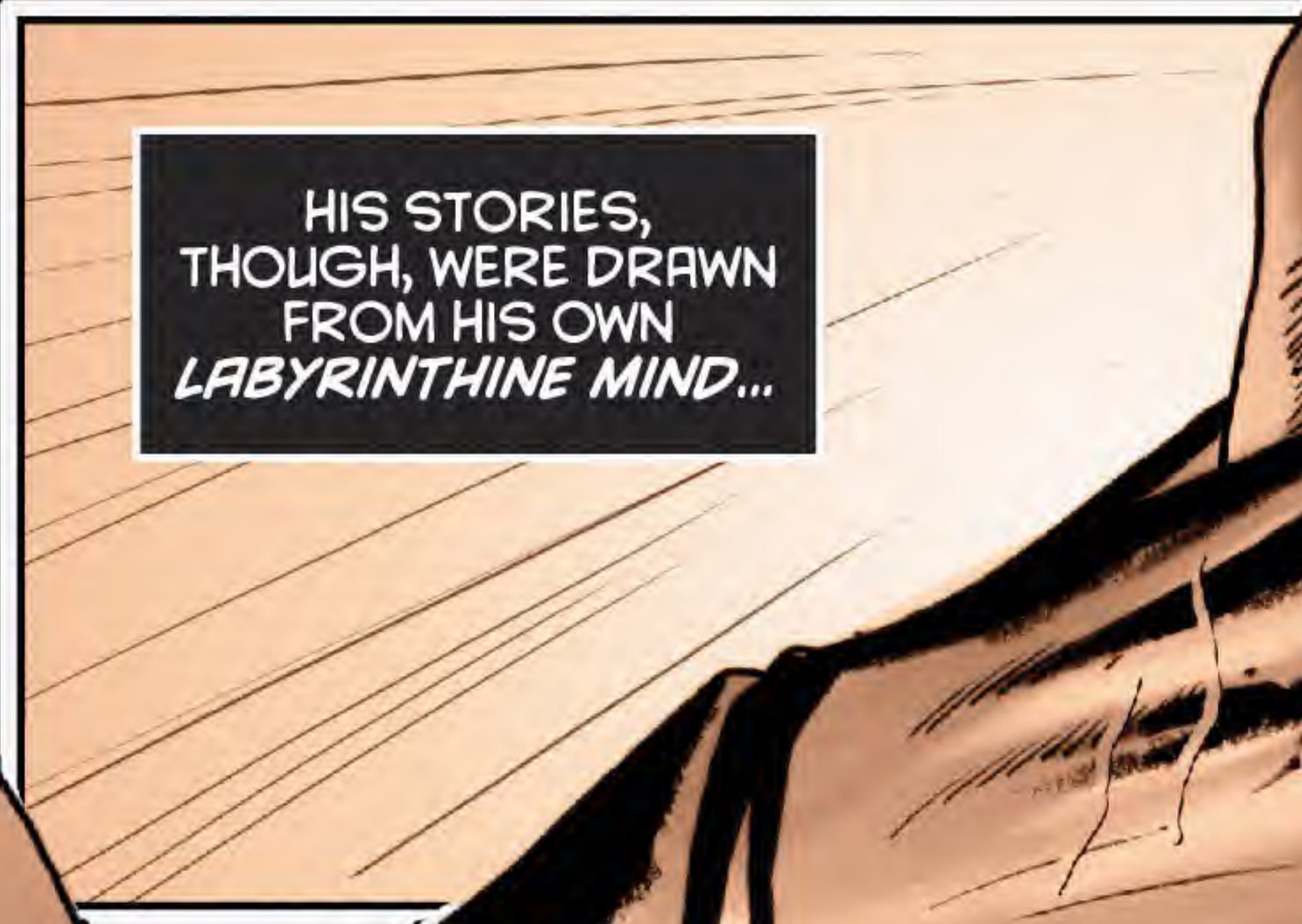


HIS WORK WAS
SO *HIDEOUS*
AND *BIZARRE*...

...PRESENTED IN
SUCH A MATTER-OF-
FACT NARRATIVE...

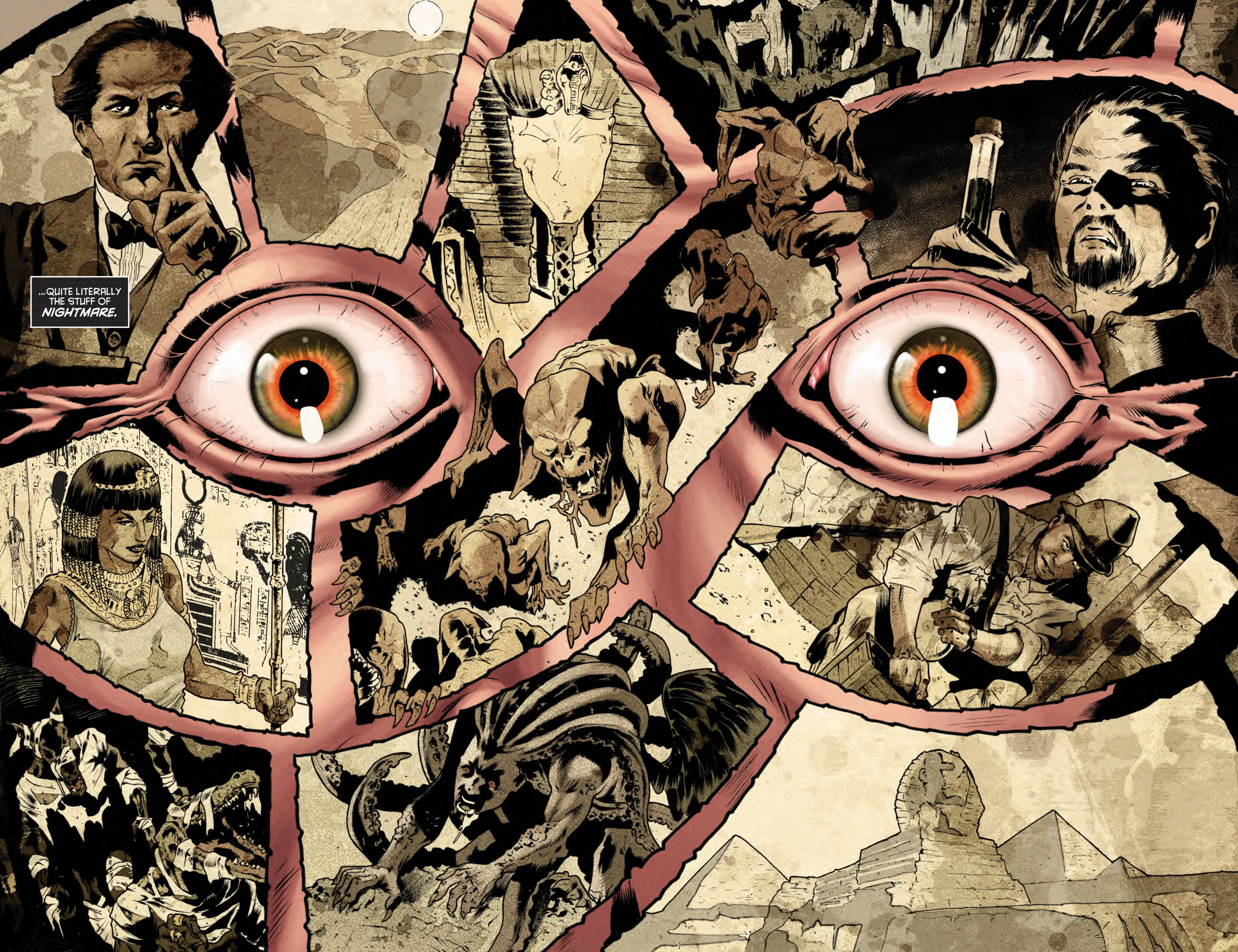


...THAT SOME OF HIS
READERS BELIEVED
HE WAS PENNING
ACTUAL ACCOUNTS
RATHER THAN FICTION.



HIS STORIES,
THOUGH, WERE DRAWN
FROM HIS OWN
LABYRINTHINE MIND...

...QUITE LITERALLY
THE STUFF OF
NIGHTMARE.



GAYLE ARGYLE...THE
MYSTIC KNOWN IN
SOME CIRCLES AS
QUEEN NITOCRIS...

...WAS **MURDERED**
RIGHT BEFORE MY EYES.



BEFORE I LEFT HER
HOME, I PROCURED
A NUMBER OF
DOCUMENTS...



...INCLUDING **ORIGINAL
MANUSCRIPT
PAGES** FOR THE
STORY LOVECRAFT
WROTE FOR HARRY.

THE STORY, IT WOULD
SEEM, WAS AS MUCH A
WARNING AS IT WAS A
PIECE OF FICTION...



...NOTES
SCRAWLED IN
THE MARGINS
PRESENTING
A **RIDDLE**...

...A **RIDDLE** THAT MIGHT
VERY WELL ILLUMINATE
THE LAST ILLUSION...



...AND EXPLAIN WHY
MAGICIANS MIGHT
KILL FOR IT...

...OR **KILL** TO MAKE SURE
IT **REMAINS** A MYSTERY.

The Society of United Magicians Presents
AN EVENING OF MAGIC AND WONDER
Mysticism! Marvels! Magic!
Featuring the Return of the Great
Harry Houdini!
Orpheum Theatre
Los Angeles, California

ORPHEUM
THEATRE.
LOS ANGELES,
CALIFORNIA.





COME,
MISS LANE.

TIME TO MAKE AN
UNFORGETTABLE
ENTRANCE.



HONESTLY,
I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
YOU ENJOY
MORE...

...THE *RUSH* YOU GET
FIGHTING CRIME AS THE
SHADOW OR THE *POMP*
AND CEREMONY THAT
COMES WITH BEING
LAMONT CRANSTON.



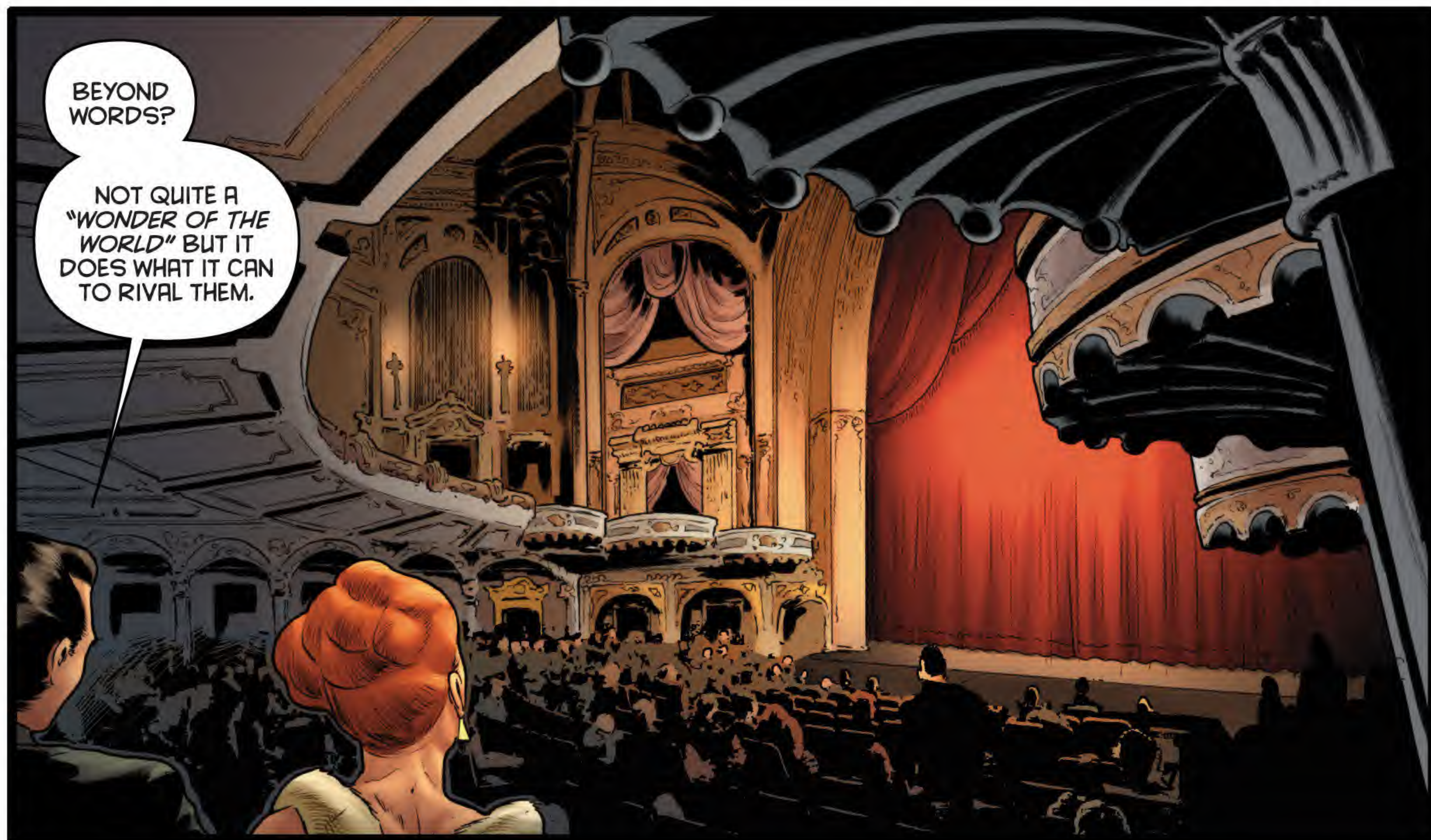
EACH HAS
ITS PLACE,
MARGO.

BUT MAKE
NO MISTAKE
ABOUT IT.

LAMONT IS
JUST A *MASK* I
CHOOSE TO WEAR
TO FURTHER MY
MISSION AS *THE*
SHADOW.

OH,
LAMONT.

IT IS--



BEYOND WORDS?

NOT QUITE A "WONDER OF THE WORLD" BUT IT DOES WHAT IT CAN TO RIVAL THEM.



WONDERS INDEED.

THIS IS SURELY THE MOST *MIRACULOUS* PLACE YOU HAVE EVER TAKEN ME.

MIRACLES ARE WHAT WE'VE BEEN *PROMISED*, YES?

ENJOY THE VIEW WHILE YOU CAN.

BEFORE THIS NIGHT IS THROUGH, THE SHADOW WILL MAKE HIS PRESENCE KNOWN.



AH... YOU MAKE YOURSELF SOUND LIKE LEROUX'S *PHANTOM*.

IS IT TOO MUCH TO ASK TO HAVE ONE NIGHT WITHOUT THE SHADOW SPOILING MY EVENING PLANS?



YOUR PLANS *ARE* THE SHADOW'S PLANS.



HOW
COULD I
FORGET?

YOU
KNOW ME,
LAMONT...

...ALWAYS THE
WILLING
AND ATTENTIVE
AGENT.



WE SHOULD
GET AWAY FROM
NEW YORK
MORE OFTEN.

WE COULD PUT
THE CRANSTON
NAME AND
MONEY TO
GOOD USE.



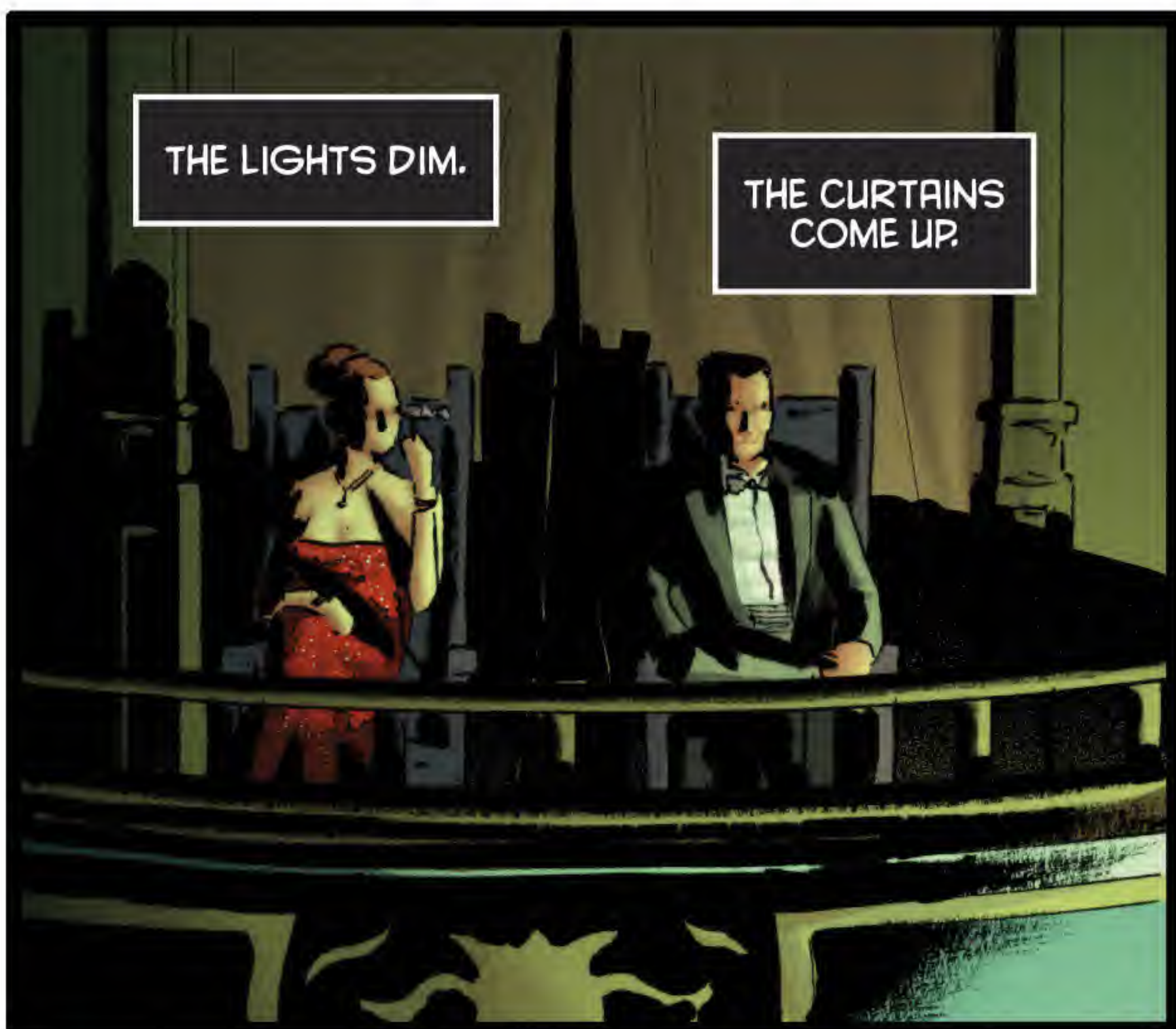
THERE IS NO
BETTER USE THAN
WEEDING OUT THE
CRIMINAL ELEMENT
FROM SOCIETY.

AND TO THAT END,
EITHER AS LAMONT
CRANSTON OR THE
SHADOW, I SHALL
TRAVEL TO THE ENDS
OF THE EARTH.



YOU CERTAINLY
HAVE A *KNACK* FOR
TAKING THE *FUN* OUT
OF AN EVENING.

NOW HUSH AND
LET ME AT LEAST
ENJOY *SOME* PART
OF THIS NIGHT.



THE LIGHTS DIM.

THE CURTAINS
COME UP.



A GASP PASSES
THROUGH THE AUDIENCE...

...AS THEY ARE MET BY
A *GHOSTLY PRESENCE*.

WELCOME,
LADIES AND
GENTLEMEN...

...TO
WHAT WILL BE THE
MOST *INCREDIBLE*
EVENING OF YOUR
LIVES!

THIS IS *NOT* THE SPIRIT
OF MY TEACHER AND FRIEND.

PERHAPS YOU
RECOGNIZE ME...

...ALTHOUGH IT
HAS BEEN QUITE
SOME TIME SINCE
I PERFORMED
BEFORE A *LIVE*
AUDIENCE.

A SKILLED
ACTOR.

MAKEUP THAT
ENHANCES
THE *DEATHLY*
PALLOR.

A TRICK OF
THE LIGHTING.

MY TIME
AMONG THE
MORTALS
MAY BE LONG
PASSED...

...BUT MY SKILLS
HAVE NOT GROWN
STAGNANT DURING
MY TIME ON THE
OTHER SIDE!

PERHAPS ONE
DAY I CAN ESCAPE THE
COLD EMBRACE OF
DEATH AS *EASILY* AS
I HAVE ESCAPED
THESE *CHAINS!*

THIN WIRES HOLDING HIM ALOFT.

AN *ILLUSION*,
OF COURSE.

AND NOW, I
BID YOU GOOD
NIGHT AS THE
EVENT IS ABOUT
TO BEGIN.

AS THERE IS NO SUCH
THING AS *REAL* MAGIC.



TWO GROUPS
OF MAGICIANS FELD
OVER AN *ARCHAIC*
MAGICAL ENIGMA.

ONE--THE *SOCIETY OF
UNITED MAGICIANS*--
WOULD RESORT TO
MURDER TO *UNLOCK*
THE LAST ILLUSION...

...A SPELL SAID TO
PREVENT *TRUE MAGIC*
FROM SEEPING ONCE
MORE INTO OUR WORLD.

THE OTHER GROUP...THE *DISCIPLES*
OF THE LATE MADAME ARGYLE...
WOULD LIKEWISE TAKE *RUTHLESS*
MEASURES TO ENSURE THE LAST
ILLUSION IS *NEVER* UNDONE.

THIS RIVALRY,
I BELIEVE, WILL
BLOSSOM INTO
ALL-OUT *WAR*...

... TONIGHT...
AT THIS EVENT.

MADAME ARGYLE'S
LAST BREATH
PROMISED AS MUCH.



GOOD
HEAVENS,
LAMONT.

THIS IS
JUST AS THE
BILL OF SALE
SAYS.



"MAGIC
AND WONDER"
INDEED.

THE MEMBERS
OF THE SOCIETY
ARE PRESENT...

...BUT THEY SEEM
UNSUSPECTING
OF ANY *PENDING*
DANGER.



WHY, MR.
CRANSTON...

...FROM THE TONE
OF YOUR VOICE,
I'D GUESS YOU'LL
BE BIDDING ME
FAREWELL SOON.

VERY
ASTUTE,
MISS LANE.

AS YOU
KNOW...WE BOTH
HAVE ROLES TO
PLAY.



"THE RETURN
OF HOUDINI."

ONE MUST WONDER
IF THE SOCIETY OF
UNITED MAGICIANS
MADE SUCH A CLAIM TO
LURE THEIR ENEMIES.



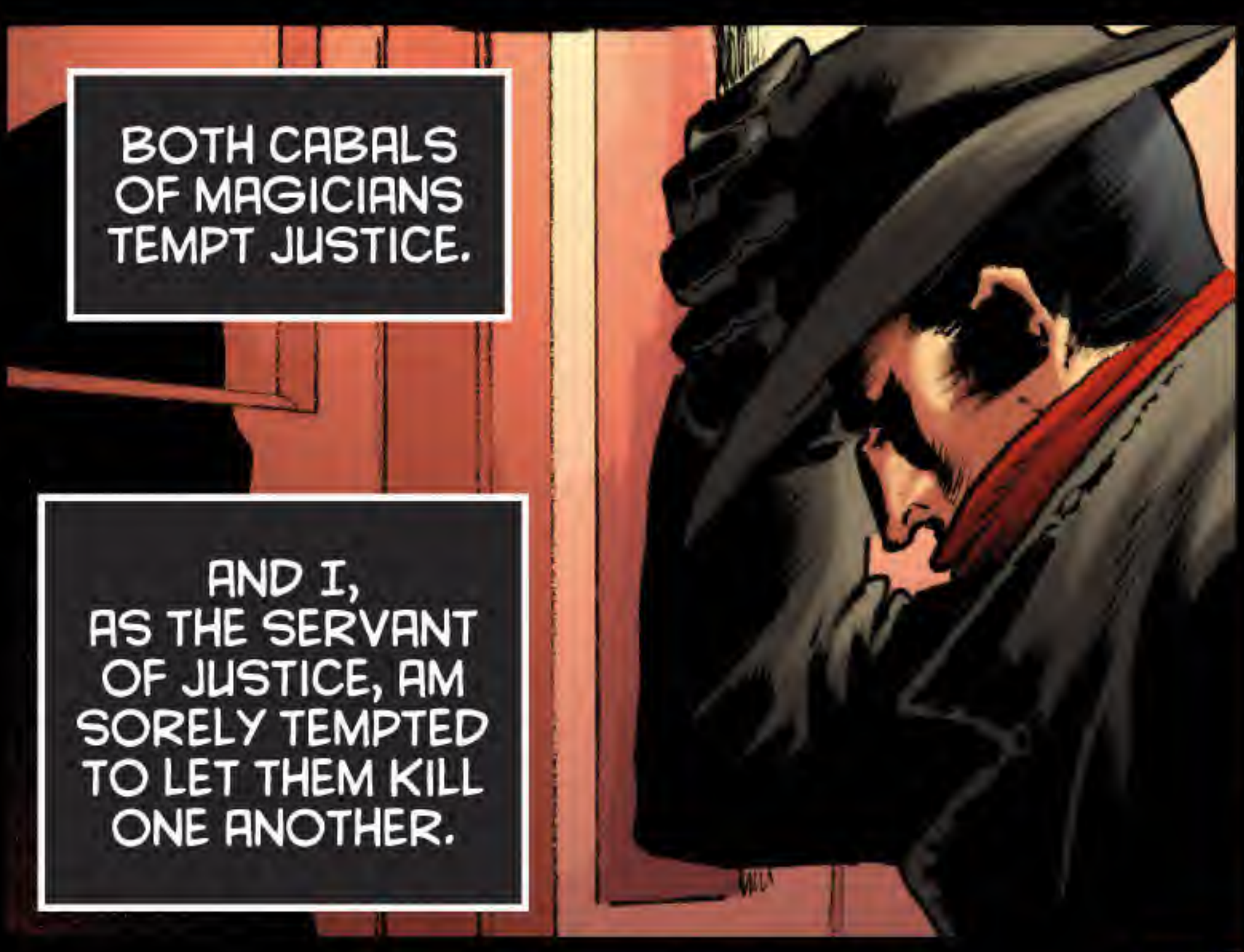
ENEMIES SUCH
AS MYSELF...

...OR THE
FOLLOWERS
OF NITOCRIS.



EITHER WAY...
THEY ARE PLAYING
WITH *FIRE*.

AND NOT THE
ILLUSIONARY KIND.



BOTH CABALS
OF MAGICIANS
TEMPT JUSTICE.

AND I,
AS THE SERVANT
OF JUSTICE, AM
SORELY TEMPTED
TO LET THEM KILL
ONE ANOTHER.

BUT EVEN THE FAÇADE
OF WAR CONCEALS
DEEPER SECRETS...



...AND THE SHADOW
WILL PLUMB THESE
DEPTHS BEFORE HE
IS DONE.

THIS FELLOW,
LOVECRAFT...
WAS NOT
UNLIKE ME.

PRESENTED WITH
SOMETHING HE DID
NOT UNDERSTAND...

...IN THIS CASE,
THE WORLD OF THE
MAGICIAN HE WAS
WRITING ABOUT...

...HE ENDEAVORED
TO LEARN AS MUCH
AS HE COULD.

LITTLE COULD HE
HAVE KNOWN WHAT
HIS THOROUGH
EXAMINATION OF
STAGE MAGIC
WOULD UNCOVER.

WHAT HE
FOUND MADE
HIM FEEL
UNSAFE...

...AS IF THE
KNOWLEDGE
ITSELF WAS
DANGEROUS.

IT *HAUNTED* HIM.

SUCH WAS HIS DISMAY THAT HE WROTE TO HOUDINI...

...OFFERING GRAVE AND SINISTER TIDINGS.

AMUSED, IF NOT INTERESTED, HARRY ARRANGED FOR A PRIVATE MEETING WITH LOVECRAFT...

...DURING WHICH THE WRITER DETAILED FINDINGS THAT MIGHT HAVE COME STRAIGHT FROM ONE OF HIS STORIES.

THE LAST ILLUSION, HE SAID, COULD BE UNDONE.

REAL MAGIC--LIKE THE SORCERY OF VARDELL GOSCELIN--COULD BE BROUGHT BACK INTO THE WORLD.

BUT THERE'S A PRICE.

A TERRIBLE PRICE.

FOR IF MAGIC RETURNS... SO TOO DOES A *TERROR* FROM *BEYOND THE VEIL*.

HARRY... WHO WAS A CONFIRMED *UNBELIEVER*... MIGHT HAVE BEEN A LITTLE MORE *SENSITIVE* TO LOVECRAFT'S WORRIES.

WHETHER LOVECRAFT'S BELIEFS WERE FACTUAL...

...OR THE PRODUCT OF A TWISTED IMAGINATION...

...THE DANGER SURROUNDING THE LAST ILLUSION ARE *QUITE REAL*.

POISON SLIPPED INTO ONE'S TEA IS AS *DEADLY* AS AN ARCANIC INCANTATION.

A KILLER WITH A GUN OR KNIFE IS AS *LETHAL* AS AN ABYSSAL DEMON.

AND I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THE SHADOW IS NOT THE *ONLY* UNINVITED GUEST LURKING IN THE THEATRE TONIGHT.

THERE ARE MORE *COMFORTABLE* SEATS, YOU KNOW.

BUT CERTAINLY THERE IS NO BETTER *VIEW* THAN THE ONE OFFERED HERE.

YOU DO, AFTER ALL, SEEM TO HAVE A PROCLIVITY FOR LOOKING DOWN FROM ROOFTOPS AND OTHER GARGOYLE-LIKE PERCHES.

HOW DOES IT FEEL TO HAVE THE TABLES TURNED?

MYSELF, I FIND IT *DISTASTEFUL*...

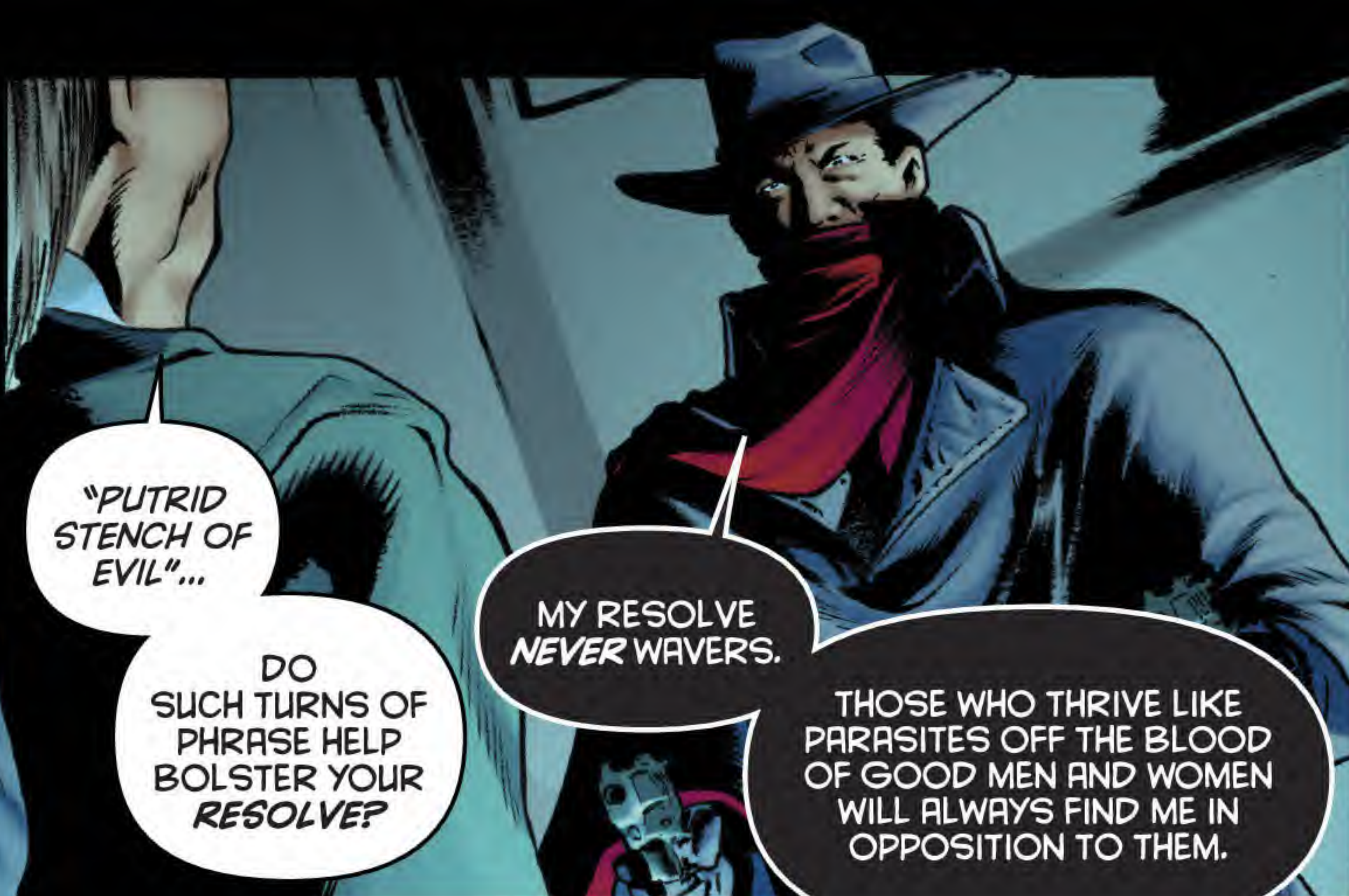
...SO ALLOW ME--

--TO JOIN YOU!



THE *PUTRID STENCH* OF EVIL DREW ME TO THESE RAFTERS.

IT IS NO SURPRISE THAT I FIND YOU.

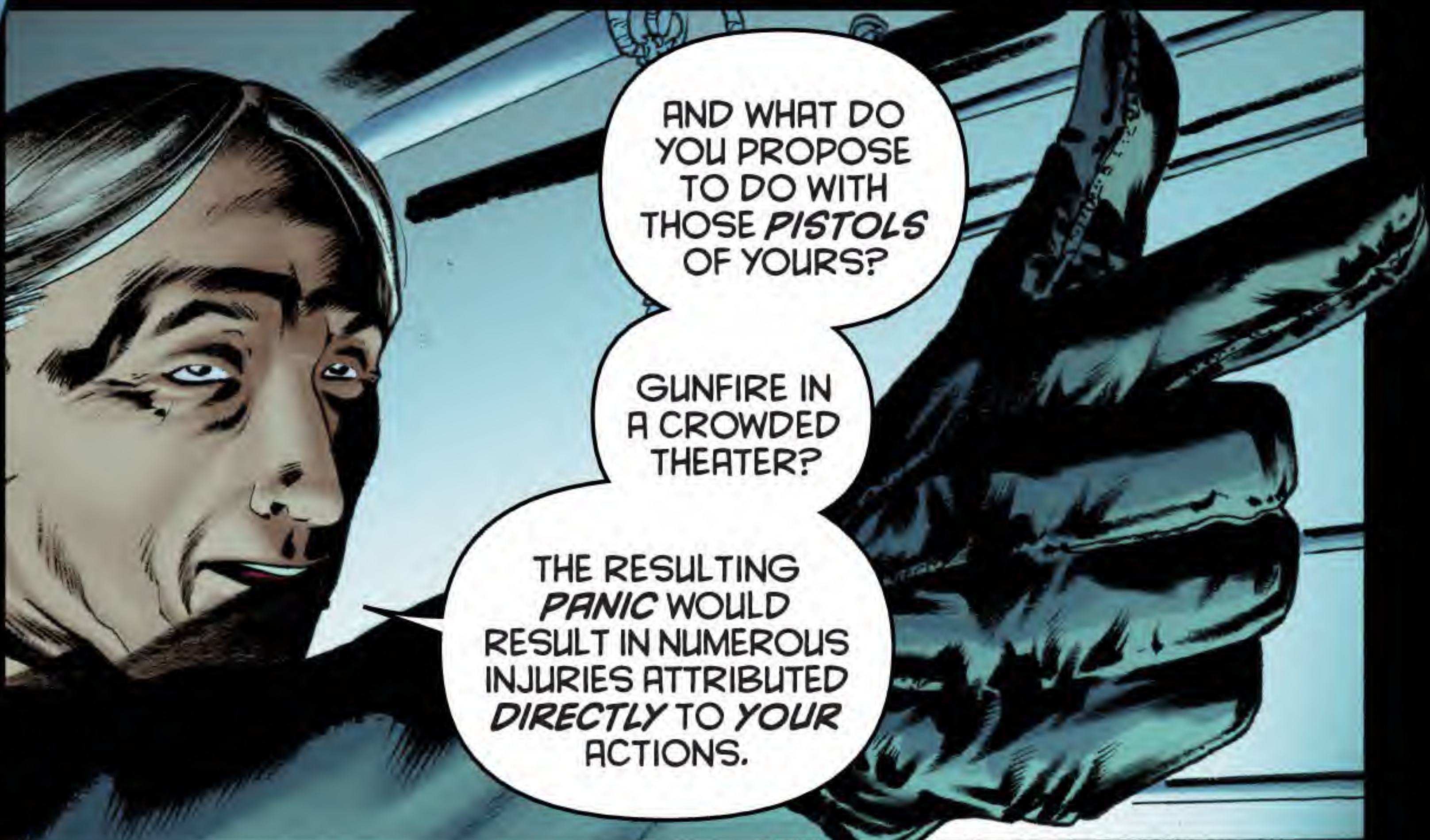


"PUTRID STENCH OF EVIL"...

DO SUCH TURNS OF PHRASE HELP BOLSTER YOUR *RESOLVE*?

MY RESOLVE *NEVER* WAVERS.

THOSE WHO THRIVE LIKE PARASITES OFF THE BLOOD OF GOOD MEN AND WOMEN WILL ALWAYS FIND ME IN OPPOSITION TO THEM.



AND WHAT DO YOU PROPOSE TO DO WITH THOSE *PISTOLS* OF YOURS?

GUNFIRE IN A CROWDED THEATER?

THE RESULTING *PANIC* WOULD RESULT IN NUMEROUS INJURIES ATTRIBUTED *DIRECTLY* TO YOUR ACTIONS.



WOULDN'T IT BE WISER TO *TALK*?



AND WHAT IS IT YOU WOULD LIKE TO--



TYPICAL OF YOUR ILK.

SEEKING NOTHING MORE THAN AN OPPORTUNITY FOR *BETRAYAL*.

AND ONE YOU *WASTED* AT THAT.

WHUMP



NONSENSE... I DO NOT SEEK TO *HARM* YOU.

I COULD HAVE DONE SO IN A THOUSAND WAYS.

I SIMPLY FIND THAT A LITTLE *PHYSICAL EXERTION* LOOSENS A CONVERSATIONIST'S *TONGUE*.



I KNOW THAT YOU RESCUED HOUDINI'S WIFE FROM THE SOCIETY OF UNITED MAGICIANS.

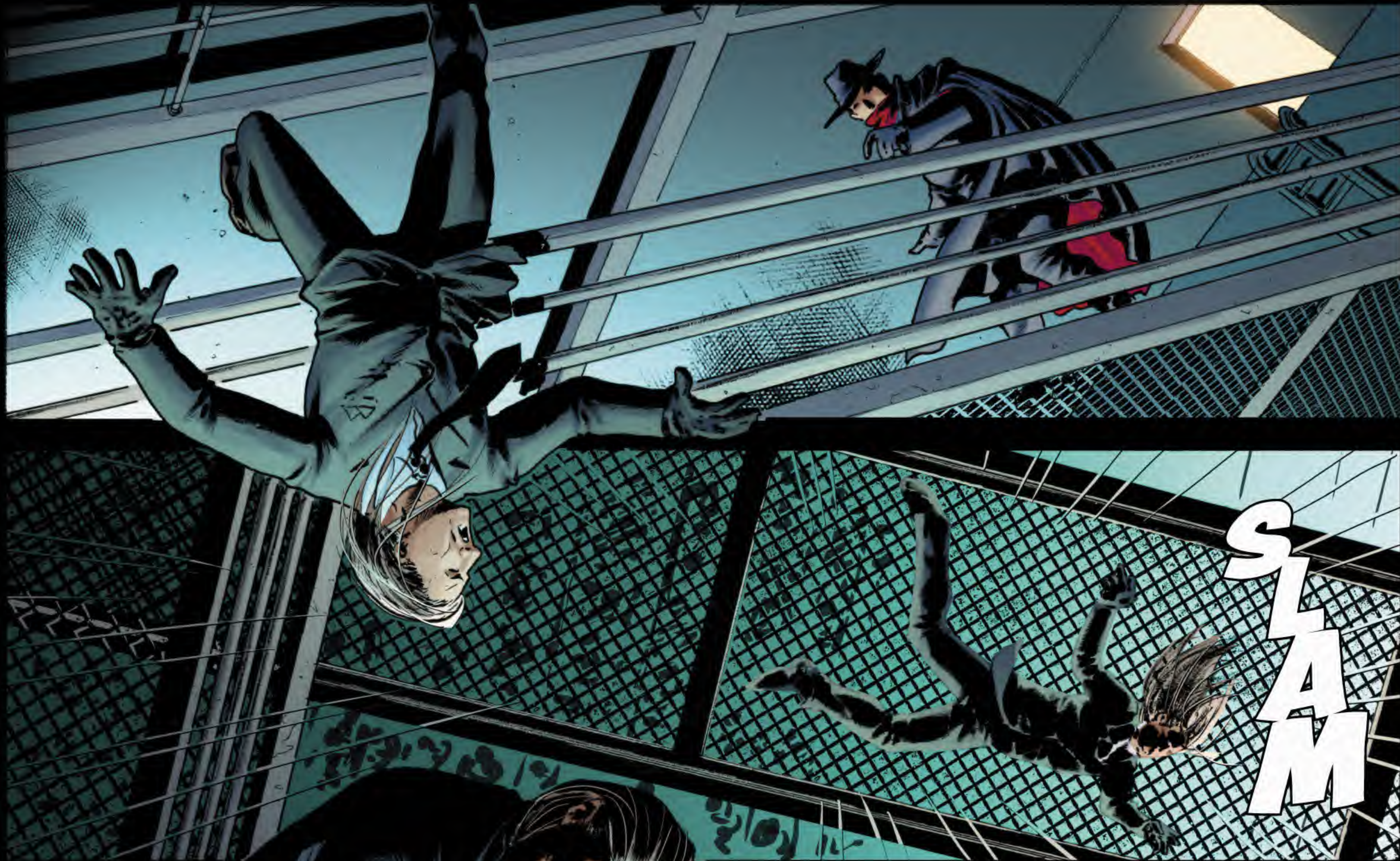
AN EVENT THEY WERE NONE TOO HAPPY ABOUT.



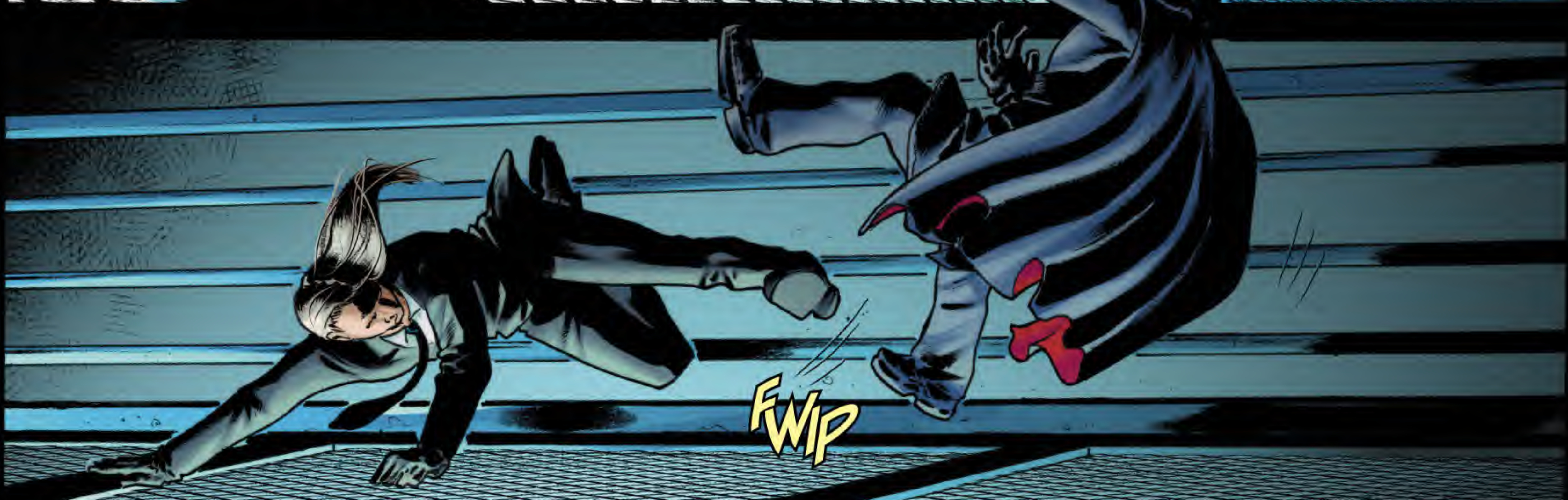
THRAK

BUT WHAT REALLY INTRIGUES ME IS WHAT BESS SHARED WITH--

UUGH!



SLAM





...WE
ARE NOT
ALONE.



PFFT

PFFT



AGH!





...THE
INFAMOUS
SANDMAN...

...THE
MAGICIAN
ASSASSIN.

I *KNEW*
ONE DAY
WE WOULD
MEET.

AS YOU CAN
IMAGINE, IT'S
A *RELIEF* THAT
I FOUND *YOU*
BEFORE YOU
FOUND *ME*.

AND THE
LEGENDARY
SHADOW.

I HALF
EXPECTED YOU
TO *TRULY* BE A
GHOST.

YOUR *LOYALTY*
TO HOUDINI AND
HIS BRIDE DOES
YOU *PROUD*.

I HOPE YOU ARE
PREPARED TO
TAKE THAT PRIDE
WITH YOU TO THE
AFTERLIFE.



NEXT ISSUE:

Two orders of murderous magicians are at war! One faction hopes to steal secrets the great Houdini discovered after his death. The other ruthlessly protects these secrets, and they'll kill innocent people in order to reach their goals. These bitter enemies can agree on only one thing, the Shadow must die!

2016 KICKS OFF A BOLD NEW DIRECTION FOR DYNAMITE'S FEMME FATALES

At last month's New York Comic Con fans got a sneak peek at what next year has in store for the iconic trio of Dynamite's leading ladies as they head-up all-new series' following the events of Gail Simone's *Swords of Sorrow*. New creative teams, costume changes, and more are on the way for Red Sonja, Dejah Thoris, and Vampirella. Check out their new looks courtesy of artist Nicola Scott and get the scoop on how 2016 is turning into another explosive year from Dynamite Entertainment.

SPOTLIGHT ON RED SONJA:

Red Sonja #1, by the creative team of Marguerite Bennett (*Bombshells*, *A-Force*, *Angela*) and Aneke (*Legends: Red Sonja*, *Damsels*) and scheduled for release on January 13, 2016, will see its titular heroine return to her homeland of Hyrkania, only to find it changed into an almost unrecognizable landscape. As envisioned by Gail Simone, the new series sends Sonja on a mission of infiltration, sabotage, and assassination when she discovers that her native people have been conscripted into the service of a Nazi-like regime.

SPOTLIGHT ON DEJAH THORIS:

Dejah Thoris, a royal warrior who has served as a major supporting cast member of Dynamite's various Warlord of Mars series as well as the star of several solo Dejah Thoris series, will appear in a new #1 issue this coming February, courtesy of writer Frank J. Barbiere (*Avengers World*, *Solar: Man of the Atom*). As described by Gail Simone, Dejah Thoris would present a fall from grace for the Martian princess, as she embarks on a self-imposed exile, assuming a new identity and enlisting as a rookie soldier on the farthest, deadliest borders of her Barsoomian civilization.

SPOTLIGHT ON VAMPIRELLA:

Vampirella #1, debuting in March 2016, will feature the writing talents of Kate Leth (*Adventure Time*, *Bravest Warriors*), and see a return to the character's roots as a horror hostess, as her costumed identity goes public... while privately, she uses her new celebrity status to uncover the links between silver screen killers and a real conspiracy of monsters.

HIGHLIGHTED ITEMS | NOVEMBER

